

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard.

According to public records, Sinclair has contributed heavily (and almost exclusively) to the GOP and the Bush/Cheney re-election campaign. Airing an anti-Kerry piece like "Stolen Honor", during prime time, and without commercial interruption (thus preventing any opportunity for a contemporaneous rebuttal) is contrary to the public interest. It is a blatantly partisan attempt to sway undecided voters to Bush/Cheney in key markets on the eve of a hotly contested election, financed with corporate dollars in direct violation of the Federal Campaign Finance laws. The FCC should not condone an illegal act such as this, and the FCC has the power (and an obligation to the viewing public) to intervene to stop this illegal effort.

If members of the public wish to see "Stolen Honor" or "Fahrenheit 9/11", then they should be able to do so on a pay-per-view basis. This compromise measure allows those interested in such propaganda pieces to have their fill, without having one side or the other rammed down their throats during prime time.

Please intervene to stop this unprecedented corporate effort to sully and manipulate the democratic process in our country.

Thank you.